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Ethnology of Pukapuka

By Ernest and Pearl Beaglehole

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

122 124 The field work of which this monograph is a partial report was carried out on a Bishop Museum fellowship. For permission to visit Pukapuka we have to thank Judge Hugh F. Ayson, Resident Commissioner, Cook Islands. The resident agent and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Henry, and their family were continually generous and hospitable to us. We are especially indebted to them for acting as interpreters and for giving much time to what must often have seemed unrewarding labor. To Robert Dean Frisbie, who placed at our disposal his wide knowledge of fishing and astronomy, we also owe a debt of gratitude. We are under obligation to botanists of Bishop Museum staff for identification of plant specimens and to Mr. D'Alte Welch for shell identifications. Mr. Adrian Digby, Assistant Keeper, Department of Oriental Antiquities and of Ethnography, British Museum, London, very kindly forwarded to us a detailed description and photograph of Gill's "soul trap". In working up the material we have drawn freely on the knowledge and technical experience of Te Rangi Hiroa (Dr. P. H. Buck), to whom we owe our first introduction to the field of Polynesian ethnology.

114 121 Scientific work on Pukapuka has heretofore been limited to two brief accounts by Gill (10, 13)*, a paper by Hutchin (18), manuscript notes of a short visit to the atoll by Bryan (5), and a brief account by Macgregor (20) based on a three-day visit to the island in April 1933. The work of Gill and Hutchin is slight and of no great value. Bryan's notes gave us a preliminary orientation and Macgregor generously placed at our disposal before we left Honolulu a manuscript copy of his paper on Pukapuka. We were thus able to check Macgregor's material in the field, and have not considered it necessary to refer to his work on every occasion where his observations are at variance with ours.

121 128 In the field, Ernest Beaglehole was especially responsible for collecting material on social and economic organization, religion, traditional history, and material culture; Pearl Beaglehole for string figures, material on children, intimate aspects of family and domestic life, the household census, stories, and other textual material. The bulk of the manuscript was written by Ernest Beaglehole.

128 Certain records on which this study is based are filed in the library of Bernice P. Bishop Museum: lists of place names, names of land divisions, household lots and talo gardens, statistical records, native texts and notes.

* Numbers in parentheses refer to Literature Cited, p. 413.

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Further material awaiting publication includes studies of string figures, myths, stories and chants, and the life of children. A dictionary of the Pukapukan dialect and a study of Pukapukan anthropometry are in preparation.

INTRODUCTION

We spent about seven and a half months on Pukapuka, from November 3, 1934, to June 13, 1935. For six months of this time we lived in a coral lime house in the middle of Yato village. During the copra-making period we lived for six weeks in a native house in the settlement of Ngake village on Motu Ko.

Everyone on the island was interested in our work and willing to help. Genealogies and traditional history were recorded at formal sessions in ethnology carried on in the schoolhouse and later in the courthouse; as many as 50 men attended these sessions. One man acted as spokesman. He was interrupted frequently by those who thought he had made a slight error, and many fierce arguments were conducted between upholders of conflicting views before a compromise was reached and the discussion could proceed. More select were later sessions in the courthouse, usually attended by about five of the best informants. The systematic consideration of each phase of Pukapukan culture was taken up in these more intimate sessions. Principal informants were: Veti and Mitimoa, both over 65 years old; Eliu and Pau, both about 50 years old; and Talainga, about 40 years old. Pau was undoubtedly the scholar of this group. Though comparatively young, he was a keen student of things Pukapukan, equally well informed on all aspects of the culture. Veti and Mitimoa were well informed in their own right but functioned more as consulting authorities than as original informants. The youngest of the group, Talainga, made up for disadvantages of age by keenness and conscientiousness. At our suggestion he wrote several notebooks full of old chants and stories which are models of Pukapukan prose and verse. Eliu was a reliable and willing informant. His wife, Molingi, about 33 years old, was a most capable and enthusiastic informant on the women's aspects of Pukapukan life. The high chief, Nawaui, whose great age—about 100 years—rendered his memory unreliable, was unfortunately not a very valuable informant.

Our arrival on the island and our stated purpose to study the life of the Pukapukan people with reference to the ways and customs of pre-missionary times created something of a sensation. The process of rethinking themselves, under our stimulus, back into past times and of recapturing past customs was necessarily a slow one, but, once started, informants went ahead with enthusiasm and interest. At first their memories were somewhat haphazard and vague, but after several months of inter-group discussions and revival of old chants, informants were able to speak with increasing assurance about old-time practices.

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124/127 plemented by an analysis of texts. The texts themselves, of which only a few examples are given in this monograph, and the vocabulary have been checked and rechecked with informants and may be taken as representing with fair accuracy the Pukapukan dialect. Data on economic life and the material culture are reliable. The material on Pukapukan religion and its interrelations with other aspects of the culture, particularly with economic and social life, is definitely weak and represents a type of historical reconstruction based on informants' accounts supplemented by textual material. None of the informants were living during the days when Pukapukan religion actually functioned.

121/128 This study of Pukapukan culture is, in the main, a presentation of the more formal patterns of behavior which have been abstracted from the total culture by ourselves or our informants. It is likely that the contents of this monograph, if imputed to one or all of our informants, would in no sense be recognized by him as significant formulations of all his cultural experience. We believe he would recognize that the majority of the statements contained herein hold true in one sense or another for some aspect of his experience, and it is this belief and the fact that the formal patterns of Pukapukan society configurate fairly well with the patterns of other Polynesian communities that are the sole guarantee of the measure of truth in the generalizations presented.

The ideas and action patterns grouped together under the title of Pukapukan ethnology would have endlessly different meanings for the various informants. It is just these personal valuations, symbolisms, and implications which the cultural set-up of modern Pukapuka makes so difficult to annotate and which attest to the continued vitality of Pukapukan culture as [184] a functional entity. Much of Pukapukan culture as here presented is the peculiar property of but few individuals in Pukapuka today. The imprint of informants' personalities is contained in all the information so freely imparted, but it is woven into the context of the information in a fashion that defies analysis, though it is none the less real. This is most striking in the realm of religion or in the chants. Full participation in the latter as a cultural value is probably limited to no more than a few individuals of the 600 odd Pukapukans living on the atoll today. The remainder have vague or ill-defined ideas about the meanings of obscure passages in the chants, though any vigorous-minded Pukapukan will, on challenge, make up immediate rationalizations to cover his own lack of authentic understanding. This in no way vitiates the value of these chants as an aid to the recapture of old-time customs. These customs and symbolisms are preserved in them, waiting only for the analyst's attention.

The following pages attempt to work out the main forms of Pukapukan culture, to hint at certain time sequences, and to indicate a few geographical

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121/128 affinities with other Polynesian systems. This provides the objective background for studying the meaning of these patterns for the personalities of those who live within the frame of reference called Pukapukan society. This task is touched upon in the data on children (2). If certain problems of symbolism, pattern status, emotional conditioning, and all that makes up the dynamics of culture have been largely overlooked in these pages, it is not through unawareness of the existence and importance of these problems but solely because the type of field work represented by this and other manuscripts is that which it was most practicable to carry to a conclusion.

NOTE ON PHONETIC STRUCTURE

194 [128] Throughout this monograph Pukapukan words are written in the ordinary English alphabet, in accordance with standard usage for Polynesian ethnolology. Obviously such recording represents only an approximate rendering of the true sounds and words of the language.

The symbols *k*, *ṗ*, and *ṫ* represent the intermediates between sonant *g* and surd *k*, between *b* and *p*, and between *d* and *t* respectively; *k* is pre-palatal before the vowels *e* and *i*, post-palatal before *a*, *o*, and *u*—it is never aspirated; *p* is aspirated only before the vowel *u*; *t* is always dental and unaspirated.

The lateral, *l*, is dental. The nasals are *m*, a dental *n*, and the front palatal *eng* (*ng*). The semivowel *w* functions as a major consonant; when it occurs within a word before *u* or *i* (as in the words *mawu*, *awi*) it has a guttural quality.

Finally, there are the bilabial spirant *v*, voiceless and unaspirated, and the voiceless interdental spirant, not previously recorded for a Polynesian dialect. This spirant (corresponding to the *th* in English "thin") is invariably palatalized, followed by a *y* slur ("thin" with a *y* inserted before the *i*, "thyin"). This compound sound (*θʸ* in certain phonetic systems) is rendered by the symbol *y* in this monograph, but is not to be confused with the ordinary *y* semivowel which does not occur as a Pukapukan consonant. The Pukapukan voiceless interdental spirant palatalized is the sound mistakenly described by Macgregor (20, p. 3) as a glottal closure accompanied by "an added breath . . . giving a sound of *i* consonant," and written by him *'i*.

The glottal closure as an independent consonant is absent. The consonants are never long.

The vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u* all have the continental values. In rapid speech, however, a short *a* is pronounced as *u* in English "but"; short *i*, especially before *ng*, as *i* in English "pin". Final *i* after *t* tends to be voiceless.

Quantity and quality of vowels, presence or absence of diphthongs, and the location of stress are not indicated in native words. These phonetic characteristics are reserved for treatment in a Pukapukan dictionary which will include also the general rules of pronunciation governing accent.

Introduction

121 The following collection of myths, stories and chants was made during a visit to Pukapuka (Danger Island) in 1934-35. Conditions under which the material was gathered have been already described [see 1: Beaglehole and Beaglehole, pp. 3-4, category 116--analyst.]

128 With the exception of several of the stories, all the myths, tales and chants were collected in text and translated in the field with the help of competent informants. Text and translation are given for two stories in order to indicate something of the flavor of the Pukapukan literary style and the characteristic methods of story telling [Texts and translations for 3 other stories have been also given--analyst.] The remainder of the myths and stories are presented in a summarised form only, full texts and translations being filed in the Library of the Bernice P. Bishop Museum. A few only of the many chants collected are given here, the remainder also being filed in the Bernice P. Bishop Museum.

Story Telling

538 Story telling in Pukapuka is largely incidental to the com-
533 posing and reciting of chants. Yet the chants draw on the stories for incidents, references, and allusions in very large measure. A chant may serve as a sort of shorthand commentary on a well known story; unless the story is known and kept in mind, the chant itself, obscure at best, is practically unintelligible. This will be clear from the chants recorded. Though proverbs are unknown, sententious evaluation of persons or events is by stereotyped reference to characters or incidents in stories and legends.

[537] Oratory as a formal art is undeveloped. The technique of
[195] story telling does not differ from that of ordinary conversation.
538 In both there is intense dramatization of the subject matter by gesture and vocal expression. When they told the Maui story, for example, informants acted it out as if they were reliving the incidents: Maui's pulling in a fish involved vigorous movement of hand and body until every fathom of fish line was hauled in from the depths of the ocean. All noises are reproduced by the narrator with great fidelity and emphasis, whether the sound "Bup!" indicating the paddling of a canoe or the harsh ejaculation "Pa!" expressing contempt or anger. When the story was completed, informants seemed both emotionally and physically exhausted and a long breathing spell was required before another story could be started. More intense dramatization I have never seen in story telling anywhere.

Introduction

●121 The following string figures were collected at odd moments
126 during the course of formal ethnological study of Pukapukan culture in 1934-1935. Information about this Polynesian atoll, its culture and the nature of the joint research of Ernest Beaglehole and myself is given elsewhere (1). I am indebted

1. See 2, Literature Cited, page 27.

to Kenneth P. Emory, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, for assistance in making the photographs from which the line drawings have been made. Ernest Beaglehole has helped me prepare this manuscript for publication.

Figures

524 String figures (waiwai) are made by Pukapukans with lengths
517 of pandanus material (lito). Both children and adults enjoy making the figures whenever the spirit moves them. "Crazes" are common. For days at a time everyone has a piece of pandanus in his hand and makes the figures whenever he has a moment to spare. Experts good naturedly teach novices, and children too young to apprehend nevertheless proudly contrive with weirdly tangled strings to emulate their elders. Then the craze dies down and no one bothers with the figures until a later chance spark recreates popular interest. The figures are made for amusement only. They have no religious or magical import.

Though most can make the majority of figures collected, only a few know them all. All the people however are familiar with the names of every old figure and are quick to label as a mere thing (mea wua) of no account, modern inventions.

The following collection includes, with one doubtful exception, only authentically old Pukapukan figures.

Comparative note

524 The accompanying table shows the distibution of 17 string
171 figures and 1 trick figure of the Pukapukan series which correspond to figures reported from other Oceanic areas. (2)

2. An asterisk over the name of a figure in the table indicates that the figure is not identical in all movements with the corresponding Pukapukan figure. In most cases one figure continues where the other leaves off. In all cases the figures are sufficiently alike over a series of movements for the correspondence to be noteworthy.

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PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT IN PUKAPUKAN CHILDREN

By ERNEST AND PEARL BEAGLEHOLE

I

121

ONE OF THE MOST memorable aspects of Edward Sapir's genius was his ability to think in terms of problems rather than within the academic limits of orthodoxly defined subjects. Ethnology, linguistics, and psychology thereby became cross-fertilized. Schools and methods became of secondary importance, or rather, were evaluated not in terms of narrow fields of investigation, but in the light of the help they promised for the solution of broadly conceived significant scientific problems. It was typical of Sapir, therefore, that he should have sensed in the problem of personality formation one of those major scientific orientations that direct the research and thinking of a generation or more of scientists. It was also typical of him that he should realize that no continuing research problem is worth the candle unless it breaks down into a series of hypotheses that stimulate and direct research not so much on several minor fronts but on one major front that draws to itself the support of sometimes independently conceived disciplines. The major problem for Sapir was the impact of cultures on personality. One of the linking hypotheses was his conception of culture, not as "something given but something gradually and gropingly discovered." The key to the way in which the individual personality discovers culture obviously lies in the field of child development. Lesser minds, having arrived at this point, might have washed hands and tossed the problem across to a field of study called "child psychology." Not so Sapir. He studied children himself (who of his students does not recall those memorable seminar discussions when the heart and mind of a child were examined with consummate skill). And as a second best, he suggested to some at least of his students that primitive children were quite as worthy of study as material culture or kinship systems. Again, however, the emphasis was always on problems rather than mere description of what children say or do or think.

It was directly under the stimulus, therefor, of Sapir's teaching that one of us undertook before a Polynesian field trip to draw up a series of notes and queries designed to serve as a guide to the study of the factors involved in the socialization of the primitive child.[1] By socialization was meant generally all those factors, influences, and processes, formalized or implicit, which the culture of the group acting through parents, elders, or other children brings to bear upon the neonate and continues through maturation to adolescence in order gradually to mould the raw stuff of human nature into conformity with group patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior. It was felt that material collected to answer such queries would throw some light on the influence of cultural factors in personality development and that further, viewing such material against the background of documented life histories, evidence might

[1] Pearl Beaglehole, *Some Notes and Queries for the Study of Personality Development in Primitive Societies* (Ms., 1934).

6 :Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (ca.1935)1941 Pukapukans

121 present itself regarding the factors bearing upon the development of personality differences.

The following material in no sense represents the fulfilment of a somewhat ambitious project. Owing to various exigencies of fieldwork[1] over which we had no control it was neither possible to study Pukapukan children with the detail they deserved, nor solve all the problems and hypotheses which we took with us into the field. Enough material was collected, however, to prove without doubt the fruitfulness of this aspect of Sapir's approach to the problems of personality. Some of this material is summarized here. If it raises more problems than it suggests answers to, this again is but tribute to Sapir's scientific acumen. After all, no new scientific approach is worth much unless it, at one and the same time, both suggests questions that should be asked and opens up wide fields of investigation. The sterile problem is the one that can most easily be answered.

II

842 The process of growing up in Pukapuka, as viewed from the vantage point of custom and
573 institution, is for the average child an uneventful and straight-forward business. Children
848 are eagerly desired by almost all parents. Male children are necessary to establish the continuity of descent and lineage. Both male and female children provide a form of old age insurance. Both, too, help to increase the flow of food into the family that results from regularly recurring village food divisions. Both sexes are also desired because the Pukapukan has real love and affection for children in themselves. The child of an unmarried mother is at no particular disadvantage. His maternal grandparents welcome the infant, giving him social status in the community. When his mother marries, as she surely will after thus establishing irrefutable proof of her child-bearing abilities, her child is almost always adopted by her husband and thus given paternal lineage status.

853 The new-born child is taken to the sea and washed, then oiled and wrapped in soft pan-
846 danus mats. For two or more days until the mother's milk comes the child is fed on coconut cream whenever it cries. For the first few days of life also the infant is cradled in the arms of female relations most of the day and night. It is given the breast whenever it cries. The mother sits while nursing, the child cuddled in her arms. Feeding is a leisurely procedure. The child is not hurried in any way but is allowed to satisfy itself fully and doze off to sleep still at the breast. When the infant is older it is held upright to nurse, its feet resting on the mother's lap. Older infants still adopt any attitude in feeding from the breast that suits them. Soft coconut flesh is introduced into the infant's diet at an early age, never however as a substitute for the leisurely and warm intimacy of breast feeding. The infant, though never left alone whether sleeping or awake, is rarely carried about. The mother remains inactive
854 for some weeks after delivery. Thereafter when she participates more fully in gardening and
857 domestic duties she leaves her child within the house in the care of an older child or female relative. The infant is carried about only when the guardian is a young girl who cannot resist

[1] Fieldwork was carried out on the Polynesian atoll of Pukapuka, one of the northern Cook group, for seven and a half months. The culture has been described in some detail in Ernest and Pearl Beaglehole, *Ethnology of Pukapuka* (Bulletin, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, No. 150, 1938).

839 asserted husbands before they summoned up enough courage to attack and kill the young men. No Pukapukan can tell this tale without commiserating with those husbands of long ago.

864 The material just summarized suggests clearly the Pukapukan practises of, and attitudes
858 to, sex among children. They may be summarized for boys as a good deal of play with the sexual organs, including masturbation and manipulation of the sex organs of other children, usually but not exclusively of the same sex. For the girls much the same holds. These generalizations hold for children up to the age of eleven or twelve. Towards the end of this age period boys and girls are both caught up into an increasing participation in adult activities: fishing, coconut collecting, food preparation, and mat making. The character of plays, at this age, does not differ from the typical wrestling plays, organized games, and imitative plays of
154 children of younger age levels. It has seemed impossible to characterize on the basis of field
883 records any flight to reality or any repression of parentally directed hostility theoretically
561 expectable from the concept of the latency period. There are likewise no records to be added concerning Pukapukan adolescence. Casual observation suggests no adolescent conflicts, no cultural storm and stress period. Nor does knowledge of the culture suggest any psychological reason or basis for possible adolescent conflicts. There is a total absence of motifs, incidents, or allusions to adolescence in the chants and folktales. The only coming of age with which the Pukapukan seems to be familiar is the assumption of sociological adulthood when the old judge the young to be ready to take on the economic and social responsibilities of adult life.[6]

V

121 Enough field data have been given, we hope, to outline the main patterns of childhood socialization in Pukapuka and some of the stresses incidental to this process of growing up. Certain theoretical points emerge from this material. They relate on the one hand to field methods and on the other hand to interpretations of the field data.

On the completion of our field work we summarized for Sapir our experience and conclusions in regard to field methods.[7] There is no need to retraverse these in detail. They related principally to an analysis of the kind of culture in which we thought children could be

178 [6] There are naturally occasional deviants who do not fit easily into this pattern. In *Brief Pukapukan Case*
605 *History* (Journal, Polynesian Society, Vol. 48, pp. 135–43, 1939) we have outlined one adolescent's growing up that illustrates interesting variations on the pattern as here stated. It should also be noted that in Pukapukan culture, before conversion to Christianity broke down some of the old personal tapus, one situation alone was
582 likely to have caused personal stress at this period. This was the strict tapu that formerly held between a man and his cousin-in-avoidance (females only). The tapu was not observed in childhood. Its incidence was first felt during adolescence. The functioning of this tapu and the stresses it brought about have been noted in the *Ethnology of Pukapuka* (pp. 299–63). This tapu is preserved today among old people. The young bother about it little. Among the younger generations several marriages have even occurred among kin who were formerly rigidly tapu to each other—an utterly inconceivable situation according to old-time patterns, and one today that causes great disapproval among the old.

[7] Ernest and Pearl Beaglehole, *Some Methodological Implications in the Study of Primitive Children* (Ms., 1938).

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121 most fruitfully studied, the kinds of situations, observations of which would lead to the most valuable data, the type of training most desirable for those studying primitive children, an evaluation of case-study possibilities in primitive cultures, and a final emphasis on the importance of long-continued study of selected children over a period of years.[8] This last conclusion we take to be fundamental. One assumption of our *Notes and Queries* was that by studying children of different age levels problems incidental to a time series might at least be overcome. But the time series itself appears to be of spectacular importance if we wish thoroughly to understand personality development and socialization processes. By observation of children for a few weeks at a time, even by repeating such observation periods at regular or irregular intervals, it is possible to compile a formidable set of data relative to sex life, play, relations to other children and adults, and so on. But the question of interpretation still remains. How are these data to be interpreted as bearing upon the production of certain personality types or upon the theory and practise of child development? Only, we assume, by studying selected children over measurable time periods. In terms of theory, analytic or otherwise, it may be possible to infer that certain strains, inhibitions, repressions should result from the conditioning processes that a culture approves. The next step in method must always be to see if such strains and blockages do occur. And unless the same individual is studied over a long period of time, how can one be sure what happens and what the processes at work really consist in? We believe "retroactive" case histories that work backwards from the present are of great value. But of greater value still would be forward-working case histories that took the infant from birth, several particular infants in fact, and studied them with a day to day care, as they interacted with their personal and cultural environment. This would be a difficult task even for the most heroically conscientious and psychologically sophisticated anthropologist. But until it is done we will always be guessing at the key which solves the problem—guessing with some probability doubtless but never being sure the key has been found. The first five years of life are generally considered of importance in our own society for establishing the main personality-reactive patterns in the child. A five year case history of a primitive child, starting from the first hour of life or before, would give the key that would open many of the doors that at present lock away the inner processes of personality socialization.

114 Turning now more specifically to the interpertation of field data, one point among many
128 may be emphasized. A survey of recent psychoanalytic and anthropological literature suggests some conflict of opinion over the relative importance of cultural factors in stabilizing personality patterns. Admittedly everything turns upon the question of what is psychologically given. If the hypothetical raw stuff of human nature is essentially plastic, easily to be molded this way or that, then culturalization must play an overwhelming part in personality development. Even should the individual be born with a basic personality type,

[8] See Ernest Beaglehole, *Polynesian Anthropology Today* (American Anthropologist, Vol. 39, pp. 213–21, 1937), p. 220. Kluckhohn has also commented on this point among others in his paper: *Theoretical Basis for an Empirical Method of Studying the Acquisition of Culture by Individuals* (Man, Vol. 39, No. 89, July 1939).

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fact that the Pukapukan attitude to overt sex expression among children is the very reverse of our own. This means that Pukapukan children say and do things that American children only phantasy about. The fundamental libidinal drives are the same. The difference is that what the children of one culture do, the children of the other culture dream. Our own feeling is that the implications of this difference for the culturalization-personality process are still unclear.

A similar suspension of judgment would also seem to be in order over the psychology of the so-called latency period. In our own society psychoanalysts conclude that repressive cultural attitudes towards sexual expression have the effect of so controlling libidinal development that the years of middle childhood, say from seven to twelve, are characterized by an absence of overt sexual behavior. Freud himself apparently inclined to the view that whether or not a latency period is found in a particular culture depends upon attitudes in that society to sexual expression or repression.[13] The data summarized here on Pukapukan children would appear to support this view. Again however Dr Isaacs, on the basis of her very extensive work with children, conceptualizes the latency period in somewhat different terms. According to her,[14] it is best understood as referring to the child's repression of its central unconscious conflicts with regard to his parents, the consequent lessening of emotional tension and stabilization of attitudes towards adults and other children. In terms of this definition it is plain, as Dr Isaacs herself suggests, that the latency period is just as characteristic of Pukapukan children as of those of American culture.

One further note may perhaps be added in regard to interpretations. The adult Pukapukan character, as judged by cultural ideals, seems to be one marked by much aggressiveness. Evidence for this is found in intense village rivalries over sport (but not in economic matters), in innumerable personal chants that glorify individual prowess in love and other pursuits, in an at times turbulent island history marked by bloodshed and violence.[15] This aggressiveness might be directly due, on a theoretical analysis, either to specific patterns of childhood conditioning or else it might conceivably represent an over-compensation for fundamental insecurities and inadequacies brought about by the conditioning of other patterns. One's inability decisively to infer the types of adult character formation likely to result from childhood patterns even in our own society is presumably due to the fact that we are working with a social psychology that is as yet not as powerful as it may sometime become. One's difficulty is increased immeasureably when any sort of definitive analysis is attempted for a primitive society.[16] We confess a present inability to show the linkages within

[13] See for example Sigmund Freud, *An Autobiographical Study* (London, 1935), p. 66 fn.

[14] Susan S. Isaacs, *Social Development in Young Children* (London, 1933), pp. 259, 397–99, appendix 2, pp. 458–61.

[15] The role of this aggressiveness in Pukapukan culture and the mechanisms whereby it receives institutionalized outlet have been briefly characterised: Ernest Beaglehole, *Emotional Release in a Polynesian Community* (Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, Vol. 32, pp. 319–28, 1937).

[16] G. Gorer has recently attempted this type of analysis in his *Himalayan Village* (London, 1938). Cf. Margaret Mead's review-article on this book in Oceania, Vol. 9, pp. 344–53, 1939.

121 Pukapukan culture that join childhood patterns to the patterns of behavior that set the norm for adult activities. In very general terms one can annotate four stages of Pukapukan child development: an infancy marked by maternal solicitude and consequent security; a weaning that sends the child a-packing in the company of his fellows; years of childhood that mean a large measure of independence and freedom from parental or adult control; a pre-adolescence that sees a reassertion of adult control and a tendency to force the child along the path to adult status. These seem to be the main stages in the process of growing up. Should they tend to produce an aggressive adult character? The answer to this question might well lie in a deeper analysis of the pre-adolescent period, where one senses the Pukapukan urge to push the child willy-nilly into adulthood. But perhaps the question is not one rightly asked. If it is, it surely brings us back once more to the necessity of forward-looking life histories. Only through these can we see the pattern actually at work molding the life of the individual. Only in terms of data so gained could one surely present the inner story of how the socialization process actually works. Only in this way could one tell the story of how the individual measures himself up to the ideal standards of a culture and works out his personality pattern in terms of his felt achievement.

Again therefore one returns to the question, what is the psychologically given and what the nature and importance of cultural conditioning? It is tribute to Sapir's insight into the ways of culture and of man to note the way in which he sensed that the study of primitive children would ultimately provide clear solutions to many difficult problems. The answers are not yet at hand. The problems are only beginning sufficiently to clarify themselves in such a way as to present workable hypotheses as leads for investigation. Sapir's theory of culture led him inexorably to certain inferences regarding the processes of culture acquisition. It is now the privilege of the psychologist-anthropologist by using this lead to enrich his own field work and thus his understanding of what culture means to man.

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BRIEF PUKAPUKAN CASE HISTORY

BY ERNEST AND PEARL BEAGLEHOLE,
Wellington, New Zealand.

114 124 THE following case history is offered as a short commentary on courtship and marriage in Pukapuka.[1] Though it refers to contemporary adolescence, the freedom of youth that it unconsciously assumes represents both an old-time and modern approved (implicitly at least) social condition over which missionary teaching lies like a thin veneer that cracks at the slightest provocation.

114 124 181 The case history is very objective. Lua (all the names are pseudonyms) was simply asked to tell something of her childhood and life before and after marriage. The subjects that she has emphasised are entirely her own. They represent the approach to life of all Pukapukan women. The very objectivity of this document serves to make it entirely typical of the way any woman thinks about fundamental values in Pukapuka, though hardly of the way she acts. The Pukapukans are an extraverted people. They tend to live a life of vigorous action. It was impossible to get the informant to make any special effort to recall emotions or feeling-tones for salient situations in her life. The material she presents on adolescence is specially interesting, representing a type of behaviour in youthful sex-experience which is probably rare, sexual play, that is, which does not reach consummation. Perhaps there is here a personality difference which for some reason or other of childhood conditioning, obscure and unfathomable at this date, resulted in behaviour entirely different from that which was and is normal for maturing adolescents.

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[1] Collected on Pukapuka (Danger Island). Dictated in the Pukapukan dialect to Pearl Beaglehole and freely translated by her. Pukapukan social organization is discussed in *Ethnology of Pukapuka*, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Bulletin 150, 1938, pp. 219-305. The map of Pukapuka (*Ethnology*, p. 18) may be consulted for place names referred to in this account.

10: Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1937 Pukapukans

interference with his plans. When it was lowered and he had returned to normal, there was no thought of continuing the torture of the woman he loved.

I have given the facts and have suggested that there is some necessity for explaining how the friendly, kind, sympathetic and generous Pukapukan comes to act in a way that is the reverse of all these qualities. It would seem that the function of such violent behavior, whether institutionalized, socially approved for the moment by a social group making new laws to fit the immediate situation, or individually patterned by a personality strong enough to defy opposition, is to provide an outlet for repressed aggression and anxiety that can find little satisfaction in the ordinary give and take of social life among a closely integrated group, extraverted in its culture patterns but forced to live a cooped life on a tiny coral atoll. Such tendencies being for the moment satisfied, the group can lapse back into more normal patterns of behavior and take up again, without undue strain, the petty annoyances and pleasures of everyday living.

The facts so far given refer to a Polynesian atoll, but behavior patterns similar to those described were not unknown among another Polynesian people, the Maori of New Zealand. The Maori tribe, the unit in which and for which the individual existed, was as circumscribed and isolated in its territory as any island group. Tribal ethics placed great value on group loyalty, solidarity, and cohesion. Yet because of individual aggressive tendencies the typical Maori tribe was a hotbed of petty jealousies, strifes and violent competitions between family groups over points of status and punctilios of honor. The major catharsis for an intolerable conflict between ideals of group loyalty and individual desires was inter-tribal warfare. A shamed or humiliated individual might sometimes provoke such warfare by deliberately and secretly going to the territory of another tribe and there just as deliberately killing all whom he could. Responsibility for the outrage would be assigned collectively to the tribe of the killer, and before the latter realized what was in the wind the avengers would sweep down, clamoring for blood and killing indiscriminately men, women and children. Thus outraged pride or dignity resulted in a type of aggressive behavior that could be satisfied only by the destruction of the members of one's own group.

In conclusion I would add that the material here given suggests further implications for social psychology. The observer who takes account of the relation of the individual to the group in those closely integrated units of the pre-literate peoples, is

● 121 likely to find clear and unmistakable the patterns of behavior which are sometimes more difficult to disentangle among advanced peoples. There is here a fruitful field for coöperation between the psychologist and the anthropologist. A realistic social or abnormal psychology must take account of the behavior of non-western peoples if its principles are to be adequately tested. The anthropologist, in turn, can gain a new insight into the meaning of customs, myths, and folk stories if he realizes that he is observing patterns of culture which may not be peculiar to one particular people, but illustrative of widely distributed types of behavior.